

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Weidmann Electrical Technology Inc

Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center

Weidmann Electrical Technology, Inc. Increases Sales with Lean Initiative

Client Profile:

Weidmann Electrical Technology Inc. is a manufacturer of electrical insulating materials in 32 locations worldwide, with manufacturing plants in Switzerland, the United States, Mexico, Brazil, China, England, France and the Ukraine. The company's facility in St. Johnsbury, Vermont employs 250 people.

Situation:

Weidmann Electric Technology realized that to continue to set the standard for efficient and effective production of electrical insulating materials globally, it must incorporate world class manufacturing methods in order to remain a viable location. These included improvement in inventory turns, a reduction in changeover times, and a commensurate improvement in workplace organization. Weidmann recognized that these improvements would enable it to better serve their customers by driving down lead times and improve on-time delivery, key issues in their industry. Weidmann had embarked on a Lean Transformation journey previously with the help of the Vermont Manufacturing Extension Center (VMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate. Realizing that this was a continuous improvement initiative, Weidmann once again relied upon VMEC to bring new ideas and skills to their leadership and workforce.

Solution:

Weidmann established a divisional goal to pursue improvements in productivity through the continued application and training in Lean Manufacturing Principles with the goal of identifying and eliminating waste in the production processes. Based on VMEC interviews, assessments and meetings, plans were put into place to concurrently train employees and do pilot projects in selected areas of manufacturing to establish a Lean culture and demonstrate impact. Continued engagement with VMEC in the areas of Lean 101 Training, Workplace Organization and Visual Systems (5S), Training Within Industry (TWI), Total Productive Maintenance (TPM), Quick Changeover and a fervent commitment to continuous improvement, the gains in eliminating waste and bettering the bottom line have been excellent. As a result of Weidmann's Lean initiative, sales per direct labor hour more than doubled, lead times have been reduced from an average of 5 weeks to 3 weeks, and the company's on-time delivery of orders now exceeds 98 percent. VMEC's assistance has contributed to Weidmann's ability to compete in today's manufacturing environment, delivering solid results in a company engaged in the highly competitive power generation market.

Results:

- * Increased sales by 200 percent.
- * Reduced lead time by 40 percent.

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- * Increased on-time delivery by 98 percent.
- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.

Testimonial:

"VMEC has been a consistent source of continuous improvement ideas and 'feet on the factory floor' training and implementation. By helping Weidmann stay current and proactive through the introduction of new ideas and focusing on improving the bottom line, VMEC has helped Weidmann's St. Johnsbury facility remain a leader in this competitive market."

Bryon Quatrini , General Manager